

# Save Money by Saving Energy This Winter

By Albert Nunez and Catherine Tunis

When you save energy, you also save money and help the environment, too. Fuel costs are rising rapidly, but you can help moderate your costs by doing all you can to save energy around the house and while driving. Saving energy can be easier than you think.

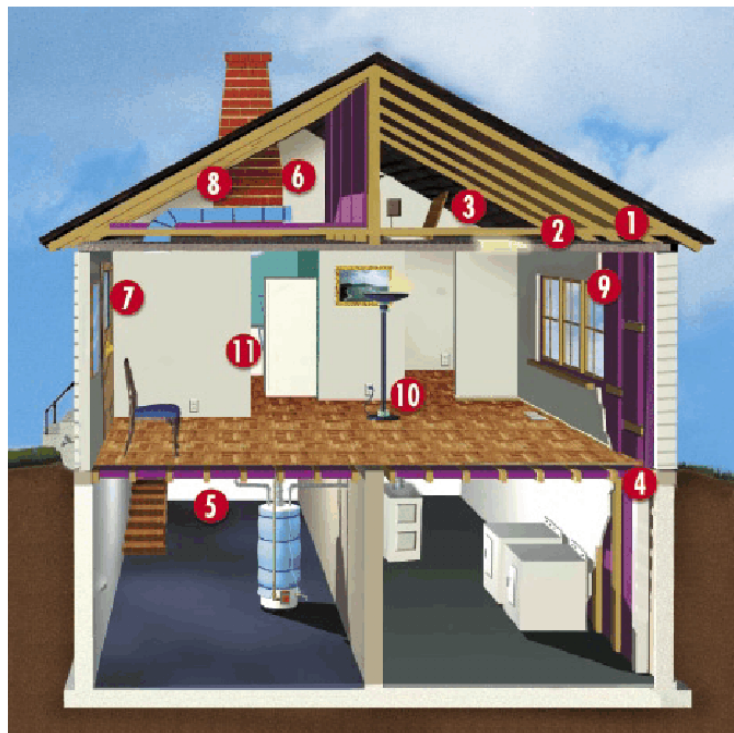
Can you change a light bulb? Compact fluorescent light bulbs use 25% the energy used by incandescent bulbs for the same amount of light. Do you have a computer? Set your computers to “go to sleep.” Your computer monitor can go into a low-power sleep mode during periods of computer inactivity. See <http://www.energystar.gov/powermanagement/index.asp> for instructions.

The US Department of Energy has produced a very informative booklet titled “Energy Savers—Tips on Saving Energy & Money at Home.” It is packed with ideas on how to save energy. It has information on insulation, sealing air leaks, heating and cooling, heating water, windows, lighting, appliances, home office, and driving. You can order the booklet by sending an email to [rebuildorders@rebuild.org](mailto:rebuildorders@rebuild.org) or link to and download the booklet at [http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/pdfs/energy\\_savers.pdf](http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/pdfs/energy_savers.pdf). The City will order a limited number of booklets that will be available in the Library.

For example, sealing air leaks is one of the quickest energy-saving tasks. Caulk, seal, and weatherstrip all openings to the outside. Don’t forget the plumbing, electrical, telephone, and air conditioner openings in exterior walls, floors, and ceilings. Air sealing can save up to 10% of your energy bill. (This will keep insects out, too.) Cut pieces of foam meat trays to fit behind switch plates and electrical outlets on outside walls.

An infrared photo or video can show exactly where the most heat is escaping from your home.

In our area, the recommended level of insulation for attics is R-49. This is considerably more



## Sources of Air Leaks in Your Home

Areas that leak air into and out of your home cost you lots of money. Check the areas listed below.

- |                   |                           |                                    |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Dropped ceiling | 5 Water and furnace flues | 9 Window frames                    |
| 2 Recessed light  | 6 All ducts               | 10 Electrical outlets and switches |
| 3 Attic entrance  | 7 Door frames             | 11 Plumbing and utility access     |
| 4 Sill plates     | 8 Chimney flashing        |                                    |

than most Takoma Park homes have.

More information about reducing your home heating bill is available at the federal government's "Energy Savers" website <http://www.energysavers.gov/>.

Refrigerators are the largest user of energy in the home behind heating and cooling. An ENERGY STAR refrigerator uses 15% less energy than required by current Federal standards and 40% less energy than conventional models sold in 2001. So look for the ENERGY STAR label when buying a refrigerator or any appliance. Visit <http://www.energysavers.gov> for instructions on calculating the electrical use of your appliances.

Thinking about buying a new car? Be sure to check the fuel efficiency of your choices (<http://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles>). Of course, you can save gas by walking, bicycling, and/or using public transportation.

